



Seattle Design Commission

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

19 August 2004

Gregory J. Nickels,
Mayor

David Spiker
Chair

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Frances Nelson

Iain M. Robertson

Nic Rossouw

Donald Royse

Sharon E. Sutton

Tory Laughlin Taylor

Guillermo Romano,
Executive Director

Layne Cubell,
Commission Coordinator

Projects Reviewed

Monorail and Light Rail Review Panels
Planning Division Update
Sand Point/Magnuson Park Updates

Convened: 8:30am

Adjourned: 2:30pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair
Charles Anderson
Pam Beyette
Frances Nelson
Iain Robertson
Nic Rossouw
Sharon Sutton

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano
Tom Iurino
Carrie Duncan



Department of Planning and
Development

P. O. Box 34019
700 5th Avenue, 19th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
phone 206/233-7911
fax 206/288-7883

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19 Aug 2004 Project: **Business Updates**

Presenters: David Spiker
Guillermo Romano
Tom Iurino

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169| DC00009)

Summary: The Commission discussed with staff larger issues of Commission business. The discussion included topics such as recruitment, preparation for the up-coming City Council briefing, and Viaduct next steps.

Recruitment for four Design Commission Positions is underway. Fourteen candidates have been selected to participate in the initial interview process. The Commission and Staff are working closely with the Mayor's Office, and are projecting a candidate recommendation by August 31st.

The Commission will deliver a 30-minute briefing to City Council on September 8th. Those attending will speak about the Viaduct project, the SLU and Waterfront Streetcar project, the SR 520 project, the Monorail, and the I-5 Rebuild. Specifically, the DC would like to link the discussion to past transportation development projects and the City's investment in such projects.

The Commission discussed how to define and clarify its role in the planning process for the Alaskan Way Viaduct. Both the Design and Planning Commissions are seeking to define themselves as single entities for the remainder of the project. The Commission reinforced their encouragement of a more detailed analysis of the No-Highway Alternative, and would like it to be looked at as an interim option rather than a final alternative.

19 Aug 2004 Project: **Monorail and Light Rail Review Panels**
Phase: Update
Previous Reviews: 15 January 2004 (Staff briefing); 20 May 2004 (Discussion); 17 June 2004 (Quarterly staff update)
Presenter: Lisa Rutzick, DPD
Attendee: Kara Weaver, DPD
Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 170 | DC00231/114)

Summary: The Commission thanks Department of Planning and Development staff for the presentation of the current state of both the Monorail and the Light Rail Review Panels and would like to make the following comments.

- Expects the schedule of the MRP to be busy within the first 120 days of bid review;
- Expresses appreciation of essential insight and contributions of the Planning Commission to the MRP, and hopes that this collaboration will continue;
- Feels that key issues of the MRP include
 - The In-Progress Westlake Transportation Hub Study, and its analysis of the Green Line link to other systems within the city that raise other issues that need to be considered in terms of interface of the downtown stations;
 - Interface with the DC, and working to recruit new members for the MRP and the LRRP;
 - Station area planning work conducted by City staff as being extremely helpful to the MRP meetings, and commends those involved;
- Appreciates Mimi Sheridan taking on the position of Vice Chair of the MRP;
- Expects the schedule of the LRRP to gear up with the work of the North Link 15% Design submission by the end of the year;
- Feels that consideration of DC members for both review panels is important as 2004 recruitment efforts continue for new Commissioners;
- Feels that there is a lack of clarity in terms of the bid process for the MRP—when it will be awarded, or how it will proceed;
- Feels the art program should apply artist design dollars to impact the guideway design and not contribute to guideway construction budget. Instead, proponents should focus art dollars on integrated station art. Is still unclear of the art program particulars, but are interested in its development.
- Questions the Westlake Station as a viable link and “transit hub”;
- Anxiously awaits design review for both projects.

Monorail Review Panel:

The Commission was last updated on the MRP in June of 2004. The final bid was received on August 16th by the Cascadia Team, and staff is expecting that the contract will be awarded around November 1st. Once the contract is awarded, the 120-day limited notice to proceed period will be initiated. The monorail is expected to be open and operational in 2009.

In terms of scheduling, the two August meetings have been canceled. There will be two meetings in September—the meeting on the 13th will be a bus tour for the MRP of the final alignment of the Green Line.

Agenda topics for September and October are likely to include a completion of key station area presentations; updates on the Seattle Center alignment agreement as needed; updates on the art program; review of station and corridor design guidelines; and planning ahead for level one station reviews. Staff would like to focus on the planning and timing expectations for the DBOM/GDCA process, which will occur immediately after the contract is awarded. They are seeking to close the gap in information between what the MRP has reviewed in terms of station design, and what was contained in the RFP by holding an open house of the design work to date before the next phase of formal reviews of the stations begins. Staff is also planning a Panel retreat for the fall that will allow an opportunity for dialogue about the MRP process and the experience thus far.

The In-Progress Westlake Transportation Hub Study conducted by Nelson-Nygaard was presented to the MRP on July 21st. The City has hired a transportation consulting firm to conduct a study of how to maximize the Westlake area as a downtown transportation hub, including its relationship to and hierarchy within the other downtown hubs at King/Weller, Yesler and Madison. The study found that there is a convergence of several modes of transit within a 7-block area of intersecting grids that present challenges both in distance and lack of visibility. The study further found that all of the stations in the downtown area have intermodal hub capabilities and that perhaps the Westlake hub area is not the most important in terms of ridership. The MRP was pleased with the quality of this comprehensive study and encouraged by the breadth of analysis considering the broader planning, design, transportation, and economic issues associated with the various alternatives. Consistent with the MRP's earlier discussions on this topic, strong support was offered for the alternative showing at-grade improvements as having the greatest cost-benefit ratio. Another point of consensus was that removing people from the street would be detrimental to an active, thriving street with commercial activities.

In terms of interface with the Design Commission, the MRP is seeking to fill one position once Iain steps down. On a parallel note, Mimi Sheridan from the Planning Commission has agreed to be the Vice Chair of the MRP.

Light Rail Review Panel:

The last briefing of the LRRP was in April of 2004. In terms of scheduling, North Link is moving ahead at a rapid pace, and aims to complete 15% design by the end of 2004. LRRP activity is likely to increase in September and October with regular meetings.

In terms of interface with the Design Commission, the LRRP is seeking two new DC representatives and one new representative from the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs for the fall, as well as a new Chair.

19 Aug 2004 Project: Planning Division Update

Phase: Monthly Update

Previous Review: 15 July 2004; 3 June 2004; 15 April 2004; 15 January 2004; 18 December 2003; 20 November 2003

Presenters: John Rahaim, Planning Director, DPD

Attendee: Kara Weaver, DPD

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00322)

Summary: The Commission thanked the Planning Director for the DPD updates and would like to make the following comments.

- Appreciates the update on the budget, and new thinking about creative strategies for project money, such as employing a grant writer, and efforts to attain contributions from outside agencies;
- Appreciates the update on the Center City Strategy addressing the complexity between center cities that function as neighborhoods vs. center cities that function as office cores;
- Appreciates efforts for public outreach;
- Appreciates the update on the Downtown Parks Initiative and open space issues, but would like to see the Commission be involved in larger discussions with the Parks Department to discuss issues such as management, programming, land use, and conceptual strategies;
- Is glad to hear that a Waterfront Concept Plan will be developed by the end of the year;
- Is glad to hear that the Mayor is interested in creating Central Waterfront parks and expanding Pike Place Market to the piers;
- Appreciates the update on the progress of the Northgate Mall Project
 - Is great to hear that the development of the Neighborhood with different residents and developers;
 - Would like to see more collaboration with the UW;
- Encourages the placement of a cultural center, such as the Cultural Café, in the City Hall West Project;
- Agrees with the Director on the potential for new City parking policies.

Several documents were handed to the Commission that discuss and outline the Mayor's Center City Strategy Vision and the schedule of current activities.

The Center City Strategy Working Draft discusses what the City is not doing now, and where it can focus the next round of activity. The vision, as stated in the Mayor's Draft, is to have "Great urban neighborhoods in the region's core, with 24-hour vitality, with diverse populations including families with children, with great parks and open spaces, a healthy green built environment, where people get farther using their feet, and where the region's job, entertainment, and cultural center can continue to thrive."

The Draft outlines areas where the City now thrives; where the Center City could do better; and states two areas where the Strategy should be focused, such as quality of life and making great neighborhoods, and mobility and connectivity with the Center City.

In terms of current activities, the Planning Commission has invited City staff and Directors to attend a Round Table event on August 26th. John also took time to point out a public Open House on the Center City Strategy that will take place on September 20th. Bruce Katz from the Brookings Institute will be the keynote speaker, talking about the Value of Center Cities to the Regional Economy. The Open House will address overall strategies with details about current initiatives, especially the height and density proposal, and Viaduct preferred alternatives. David Dixon from Goody Clancy Architects will speak on November 15th on Design Qualities of Density and the importance of amenity and urban design.

The departments that are critical to the Center City Strategy are DPD, Parks, and SDOT. As a result, the Strategy relates very closely to the Mayor's Downtown Parks Initiative and revitalization efforts. The Commission discussed and addressed design issues related to social problems and park character/context.

Mayor Nickels will be one of eight mayors attending the Mayor's Institute on City Design in South Carolina, and will be presenting a section of the City's Central Waterfront Plan from Pier 57 to Pier 62/63.

The Northgate project is moving forward, with substantial progress being made as a result of the development agreement between the City, Lorig and Associates, Simon, and the creation of the Neighborhood Stakeholder Group. Lorig is moving forward with a housing development that could consist of 400-500 units on the South lot, Simon will be demolishing buildings on the main site, the City is moving ahead with 5th Avenue improvements, and construction of the library and community center is pending. The Pedestrian and Open Space Plan is near completion, and a "unified map" is being composed that visually shows how all elements of the Northgate Plan are related.

August 19 Commission Business

ACTION ITEMS

A. TIMESHEETS

B. MINUTES FROM 17 JUNE AND 15 JULY—APPROVED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

C. PUBLIC OUTREACH—IURINO

D. PROJECT UPDATES—ROMANO AND IURINO

ANNOUNCEMENTS

E. DC/PC WATERFRONT SUBCOMMITTEE—AUGUST 27TH, 12-

1:30 PM, SMT 1940

F. COUNCIL URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

COMMITTEE BRIEFING—SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2PM

G. DESIGN COMMISSION SITE TOURS—SEPTEMBER 9TH, 8:45 AM-2

PM

19 Aug 2004 Project: Sand Point/Magnuson Park Updates

Phase: Overview

Previous Reviews: 16 May 2002 (Design Development); 7 August 2003 (General Project Briefing);
1 November 2001 (Briefing); 7 December 2000 (Schematic Design); 20 July
2000 (Briefing); 9 September 1999 (Master Plan Briefing)

Presenters: Eric Friedli, Seattle Department of Parks

Time: 1 hour

(SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00036)

Action: The Commission thanked the proponent for the informative overview of multiple ongoing projects of Magnuson Park and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.

- Congratulates the proponent on the success of the completed work to date, including the community garden, the remodeled off-leash area, and the community center buildings;
- Pleased to see that the athletic field and the wetlands redevelopment project has been improved by collaboration of the surrounding community and the Parks Department, and supports the changes recommended by Council;
- Encourages the proponent to incorporate an environmental education component in the first phase of the project;
- Encourages the proponent to treat the environment as a place for wildlife ecology, while providing space for recreation;
- Pleased to hear that the historical reference to the runway is being maintained and explored, and encourages proponent to look at possible use of new runway lights as a subtle non-intrusive way to refer to the history of the site;
- Pleased to hear that proponents have held onto the strong circulation axis as an organizational system for the fields;
- Encourages proponent to involve environmental artists as part of the design team as soon as possible, as they can inform the understanding of the site;
- Lends support to any efforts to reopen public access to the NOAA grounds;
- Approves the overview of the project and looks forward to future development updates;
- One opposition due to a lack of understanding of the environmental component;
- 6:1 in favor of supporting continued design.

The project team has been before the DC on several occasions to review several sections of the Sand Point/Magnuson Park project. They updated the Commission on the status of implementation of the Community Garden (dedication of the Garden in May), the Children's Playground, the Off-Leash Area, and the Recreation Center.

- The Northshore Recreation Area has \$1.5 million in grant funding, and proponents should begin work on the water when they acquire permits. Construction should begin next summer, with inland construction beginning in the winter. The plan calls for shoreline restoration, filling the shoreline around the bulkhead to enhance fish habitat.

- Proponents will begin work on the shoreline portion of the Off-Leash area after Labor Day. The project brings in natural gravels, includes natural plantings, and a picnic shelter.
- The Parks Community Center buildings are open and operational. They opened in February, and offer several different programs.



The Commission was updated on the Athletic Field Wetland Habitat Project. The athletic fields (three soccer fields, two full-sized baseball diamonds, and two little league diamonds) are all synthetic, and are lit until 10 pm six nights per week as recommended by Council. One soccer field and one baseball diamond are not lit. The wetland habitat complex is a 65-acre wetland restoration area that removes tennis courts, a parking lot, and a roadway to facilitate the construction of the habitat. It includes a 15-acre natural grass field to be used for recreational activity. Phase I of the project develops 11 of the 15-acre field, and construction has started. Development expands the existing fields, and will turn the drainage ditches into regulated wetland areas. The trail system will remain the same with a few marshes and lagoons.

Phase II development will include a portion of the wetlands and some of the athletic fields. Proponents have received \$9 million in ProParks Levy funds to begin this phase, and are working to bring together fund raising plans and money from other private funding sources by next year. Construction is slated to begin in 2006 or 2007.

The park is 320 acres, is the second largest park in the City, and has a 75-acre historic district that encompasses vacated Navy buildings on site. Parks has been working to create and implement plans for the historic site.

Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns

- Asks if the permitting process suggests that the wetlands may not be developed coherently.
 - Proponents stated that they won't be. The first piece will have to be designed to fit with existing conditions and future development, etc. The full project is about \$60 million, and proponents state a huge funding gap that will prohibit the development of the entire project at once.
- Asks about an environmental center.
 - Proponents stated that there is an Environmental Education Pavilion designed to operate as an outdoor learning laboratory. Proponents would like to provide the educational opportunity for people to see how a site evolves, as well as intensive outdoor educational opportunities for young people.
- Asks if it would be good to put some money into the environmental education program. Suggests forming a partnership with schools.
 - Proponents stated that Phase IA contains an upland forest area that they will begin to improve with some of the funding. The limits on funding are that certain monies have already been set aside for certain parts of the project.
- Asks for clarification on what the divits are used for.
 - Proponents stated that the divits are a series of depressions that will collect water and will include different types of vegetation.
- Asks if the historic runway lights are still part of the project.
 - Proponents stated that they are still incorporated into the project. Survey markers are in line with where the old runway used to be, and project artists have incorporated an element into the line that involves planet orientation at later stages of the project.
- Would like to see remnants of the runway lights delineated in a soft, subtle way.
- Asks for clarification as to where the posts are located that will light the soccer fields.
 - Proponents stated that two are in the end zones, and two are located on the sides.
- Suggests that proponents consider shared lighting options.
 - Proponents stated that shared lighting is not an option. The current proposed lighting schemes were devised out of respect for the housing development on the west side of the site.
- Asks if the public art at NOAA is accessible to the public.
 - Proponents stated that the Sound Garden and the gate to NOAA is closed.
- Asks for clarification as to where the water goes when watering the natural grass field.
 - Proponents stated that the water goes through biofiltration, moving through the wetland and the ponds before reaching the shoreline and water.
- Asks if the arts component is funded.
 - Proponents stated that there is money for the component, but it hasn't been incorporated into the project yet.

19 Aug 2004 Project: **Executive Director Report**

Phase: Update

Presenters: Guillermo Romano, Executive Director, DPD

Time: 45 minutes

(SDC Ref. # 169 | DC00009)

Guillermo met with Peter Steinbruck, and noted that he is interested in the work the DC has been doing to date. He is supportive of the Commission's role in the City, as is the Deputy Mayor and City Council. They offered continued support of the Commission, and voiced encouragement for an active presence in project review, while showing firm and clear ways of communicating.

The Department of Neighbors' Yvonne Sanchez is involved in public outreach, and will be working with Guillermo on efforts for mentoring and participation in public events. Collaboration with the Department will give the DC exposure, especially in efforts to clarify the differences in roles between the Design Commission, Planning Commission, and the Design Review Board.

The Department of Parks' Erin Devoto has invited Guillermo to take part in their staff meetings. He hopes to be able to provide Parks with a greater understanding of the premise behind design review, as well as providing the Commission with a point-of-view from the Department's perspective. The conversation was not finished due to time constraints, but may continue at a later date.